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Commission on the Status of Women

Report on the fifty-second session (25 February-7 and 13 March 2008)

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Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures.

[31 March 2008]

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Chapter I

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Agreed conclusions on financing gender equality and the empowerment of women

1. The following agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission are brought to the attention of the General Assembly as an input into the preparations for and outcome of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus to be held in Doha from 29 November to 2 December 2008.

Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women*

1. The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which emphasized the need for political commitment to make available human and financial resources for the empowerment of women and that funding had to be identified and mobilized from all sources and across all sectors to achieve the goals of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, which called upon Governments to incorporate a gender perspective into the design, development, adoption and execution of all policies and budgetary processes, as appropriate, in order to promote equitable, effective and appropriate resource allocation and establish adequate budgetary allocations to support gender equality and development programmes that enhance women's empowerment.

2. The Commission reaffirms the declaration adopted on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, which stressed that challenges and obstacles remained in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and pledged to take further action to ensure their full and accelerated implementation.

3. The Commission recalls the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey, Mexico, in 2002, which affirms, inter alia, that a holistic approach to the interconnected national, international and systemic challenges of financing for development, sustainable, gender-sensitive, people-centred development, in all parts of the globe is essential.

4. The Commission also recalls the 2005 World Summit and reaffirms that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, the International Conference on Population and Development and other relevant United Nations summits and conferences are essential contributions to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in particular, on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 61-64.

5. The Commission reaffirms the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and takes note of the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women towards the practical realization of the principle of equality between women and men and between girls and boys.

6. The Commission also reaffirms that States have primary responsibility for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and that gender mainstreaming and national machineries are necessary and play a critical role in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and that, in order for national machineries to be effective, a strong institutional framework with clear mandates, location at the highest possible level, accountability mechanisms, partnership with civil society, a transparent political process, adequate financial and human resources and continued strong political commitment are crucial.

7. The Commission recalls that the Platform for Action recognizes that its implementation requires adequate financial resources committed at the national and international levels and that strengthening national capacities in developing countries in this regard requires striving for the fulfilment of the agreed targets of overall official development assistance from developed countries as soon as possible. The Commission recognizes the importance of the full utilization of all sources of development finance.

8. The Commission also recognizes the importance of gender mainstreaming as a tool for achieving gender equality and, to that end, the need to promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres and to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender.

9. The Commission reaffirms that gender equality and the promotion and protection of the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all are essential for advancing development, peace and security, and stresses that peace is inextricably linked to equality between women and men and to development.

10. The Commission reaffirms that the promotion and protection of, and respect for, the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women, including the right to development, which are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, should be mainstreamed into all policies and programmes aimed at the eradication of poverty, and also reaffirms the need to take measures to ensure that every person is entitled to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development.

11. The Commission notes the growing body of evidence demonstrating that investing in women and girls has a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth and that increasing women's economic empowerment is central to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and to the eradication of poverty, and recognizes that adequate resources need to be allocated at all levels, mechanisms and capacities need to be

strengthened and gender-responsive policies need to be enhanced to fully utilize the multiplier effect.

12. The Commission reaffirms the goals aimed at reducing maternal and child mortality, combating HIV/AIDS and improving maternal health by 2015, as contained in the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the goal of achieving universal access to reproductive health, as set out at the International Conference on Population and Development, which are critical to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

13. The Commission recalls the recognition in the Beijing Platform for Action of the role of the United Nations, including funds, programmes and specialized agencies, in particular the special roles of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), within their respective mandates, and recognizes the role of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women, as part of the United Nations system, in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and, therefore, in the implementation of the Platform for Action.

14. The Commission also recalls that the Bretton Woods institutions, other financial institutions and the private sector also have an important role to play in ensuring that financing for development promotes gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

15. The Commission recognizes the importance of non-governmental organizations, as well as other civil society actors, in advancing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

16. The Commission is concerned that insufficient political commitment and budgetary resources pose obstacles to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and continue to undermine the effectiveness and sustainability of both national mechanisms for the advancement of women and women's organizations in advocating for, implementing, supporting and monitoring the effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

17. The Commission is concerned about the growing feminization of poverty and reiterates that eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today, and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, in particular for developing countries, including the least developed countries. In this regard, the Commission stresses that achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals is a global effort that requires investing sufficient resources for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

18. The Commission remains concerned about the lingering negative consequences, including for women, of structural adjustment programmes, stemming from inappropriate design and application.

19. The Commission expresses its concern about the under-resourcing in the area of gender equality in the United Nations system, including at UNIFEM and INSTRAW, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and

Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women, and stresses the need for more effective tracking of resources allocated to and spent on enhancing gender equality and the empowerment of women across the United Nations system, including on gender mainstreaming.

20. The Commission states that the global commitments for the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women since the Fourth World Conference on Women, including through the Monterrey Consensus, have yet to be fully implemented.

21. The Commission urges Governments and/or, as appropriate, the relevant funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, and invites the international financial institutions, civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, bearing in mind national priorities, to take the following actions:

(a) Increase the investment in gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, taking into account the diversity of needs and circumstances of women and girls, including through mainstreaming a gender perspective in resource allocation and ensuring the necessary human, financial and material resources for specific and targeted activities to ensure gender equality at the local, national, regional and international levels, as well as through enhanced and increased international cooperation;

(b) Ensure that sufficient resources are allocated for activities targeting the elimination of persistent obstacles to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action;

(c) Design and strengthen poverty eradication strategies, with the full and effective participation of women, that reduce the feminization of poverty and enhance the capacity of women and empower them to meet the negative social and economic impacts of globalization;

(d) Create an environment in which women and girls can fully share the benefits of the opportunities offered by globalization;

(e) Integrate a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and reporting of all national economic policies, strategies and plans, in a coordinated manner across all policy areas, including in national development, social protection and poverty reduction strategies, and involve national mechanisms for the advancement of women and women's organizations in the design and development of such policies, strategies and plans with the goal of gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(f) Incorporate gender perspectives into all economic policymaking and increase the participation of women in economic governance structures and processes in order to ensure policy coherence and adequate resources for gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(g) Give priority to assisting the efforts of developing countries, including the least developed countries, to ensure the full and effective participation of women in deciding and implementing development strategies and integrating gender concerns into national programmes, including by providing adequate resources to operational activities for development in

support of the efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(h) Remove barriers and allocate adequate resources to enable the full representation and full and equal participation of women in political, social and economic decision-making and in administrative entities, in particular those responsible for economic and public finance policies, in order to guarantee the full and equal participation of women in the formulation of all plans, programmes and policies;

(i) Strengthen the capacities and mandates of institutional frameworks and accountability mechanisms, including of national machineries for the advancement of women, and ensure that they are continuously and adequately resourced and given the authority necessary to carry out their critical role in advocating for, supporting, monitoring and evaluating the integration of gender perspectives in all policy areas and the implementation of gender equality plans, programmes and legislation;

(j) Strengthen a coordinated and institutionalized dialogue between national mechanisms for the advancement of women, relevant governmental agencies and entities, including ministries of finance and planning and their gender focal points, and women's organizations in order to ensure the integration of gender perspectives into all national development policies, plans and budgets;

(k) Cost and adequately resource national policies, programmes, strategies and plans for gender equality and the empowerment of women, including gender mainstreaming and affirmative action strategies, and ensure that they are incorporated into overall national development strategies and reflected in relevant sector plans and budgets to achieve international and regional commitments for gender equality, including Millennium Development Goal 3;

(l) Allocate resources for capacity development in gender mainstreaming in all ministries, particularly within national women's machineries and finance ministries and, as appropriate, local authorities, in order to ensure that domestic resource mobilization and allocation are carried out in a gender-responsive manner, and reinforce national efforts in capacity-building in social and gender budget policies;

(m) Improve, systematize and fund the collection, analysis and dissemination of sex-disaggregated and gender-related data, including data disaggregated by age and other factors and data on women's contribution to the care economy, and develop necessary input, output and outcome indicators at all levels to measure progress in financing gender equality and the empowerment of women, in particular in introducing and implementing gender-responsive approaches to public finance;

(n) Undertake and disseminate gender analysis of policies and programmes related to macroeconomic stability, structural adjustment, external debt problems, taxation, investments, employment, markets and all relevant sectors of the economy and support and facilitate research in those areas, with a view to achieving the objectives of the Platform for Action and with respect to their impact on poverty, on inequality and particularly on women, as well as

to assess their impact on family well-being and conditions and adjust them, as appropriate, to promote more equitable distribution of productive assets, wealth, opportunities, income and services;

(o) Carry out gender-sensitive analysis of revenues and expenditures in all policy areas and take into account the review and evaluation results in budget planning, allocation and revenue-raising in order to enhance the contribution of Government expenditures to accelerating the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

(p) Develop and implement, where appropriate, methodologies and tools, including national indicators, for gender-responsive planning and budgeting in order to systematically incorporate gender perspectives into budgetary policies at all levels, with a view to promoting gender equality in all policy areas;

(q) Urge developed countries that have not yet done so, in accordance with their commitments, to make concrete efforts towards meeting the target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of their gross national product to least developed countries, and encourage developing countries to build on the progress achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help meet development goals and targets and, inter alia, to assist them in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(r) Ensure the effective and equitable participation of developing countries in the formulation of financial standards and codes, with a view to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(s) Strengthen the focus and impact of development assistance, specifically targeting gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, in line with national development priorities, through both gender mainstreaming and funding of targeted activities and enhanced dialogue on those issues between donors and developing countries, and strengthen mechanisms to effectively measure resources allocated to incorporating gender perspectives in all sectors and thematic areas of development assistance;

(t) Encourage the integration of gender perspectives in aid modalities and efforts to enhance aid delivery mechanisms;

(u) Identify and implement development-oriented and durable solutions that integrate a gender perspective into the external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries, including least developed countries, inter alia, through debt relief, including the option of debt cancellation under official development assistance, in order to help them to finance programmes and projects targeted at development, including the advancement of women;

(v) Encourage international financial institutions to continue to take gender perspectives into account in the design of loans, grants, projects, programmes and strategies;

(w) Identify and address the differential impact of trade policies on women and men and incorporate gender perspectives in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of trade policies, develop strategies to expand trade opportunities for women producers and facilitate the active participation

of women in national, regional and international trade decision-making structures and processes;

(x) Undertake gender-sensitive assessments of national labour laws, policies and programmes and establish gender-sensitive policies and guidelines for employment practices, including those of transnational corporations, building on appropriate multilateral instruments, including the conventions of the International Labour Organization;

(y) Allocate adequate resources for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in the workplace, including unequal access to labour market participation and wage inequalities, as well as reconciliation of work and private life for both women and men;

(z) Establish and fund active labour market policies devoted to the promotion of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including the full participation of women in all international and national development and poverty eradication strategies, the creation of more and better jobs for women, both urban and rural, and their inclusion in social protection and social dialogue;

(aa) Take measures to develop, finance, implement, monitor and evaluate gender-responsive policies and programmes aimed at promoting women's entrepreneurship and private initiative, including through microfinance, microcredit and cooperatives, and assist women-owned businesses in participating in and benefiting from, inter alia, international trade, technological innovation and transfer, investment and knowledge and skills training;

(bb) Fully maximize the role of and ensure access to microfinance tools, including microcredit for poverty eradication, employment generation and, especially, for the empowerment of women, encourage the strengthening of existing and emerging microcredit institutions and their capacities, including through the support of international financial institutions, and ensure that best practices are widely disseminated;

(cc) Undertake legislative and administrative reforms to give women full and equal access to economic resources, including the right to inheritance and to ownership of land and other property, credit, natural resources and appropriate technologies;

(dd) Take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women and increase their access to and control over bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit, giving special attention to poor, uneducated women; support women's access to legal assistance; encourage the financial sector to mainstream gender perspectives in its policies and programmes; ensure women's full and equal access to training and productive resources and social protection; and facilitate equal access of women, particularly women in developing and least developed countries, to markets at all levels;

(ee) Strengthen education, health, and social services and effectively utilize resources to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and ensure women's and girls' rights to education at all levels and the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health,

including sexual and reproductive health, as well as quality, affordable and universally accessible health care and services, in particular primary health care;

(ff) Address the overall expansion and feminization of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, taking into account that women and girls bear a disproportionate share of the burden imposed by the HIV/AIDS crisis, that they are more easily infected, that they play a key role in care and that they have become more vulnerable to violence, stigma and discrimination, poverty and marginalization from their families and communities as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis, and, in that regard, significantly scale up efforts towards the goal of universal access to comprehensive prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010 and ensure that those efforts integrate and promote gender equality;

(gg) Ensure adequate financing for women's full, equal and effective participation at all levels in conflict prevention, management and resolution, peace negotiations and peacebuilding, including adequate national and international funding to ensure proper access to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and other relevant programmes for women and girls;

(hh) Reduce excessive military expenditures, including global military expenditures, trade in arms and investment for arms production and acquisition, taking into consideration national security requirements, in order to permit the possible allocation of additional funds for social and economic development, including for gender equality and the advancement of women;

(ii) Ensure that adequate resources are allocated for activities targeting persistent serious obstacles to the advancement of women in situations of armed conflict and in conflicts of other types, wars of aggression, foreign occupation, colonial or other alien domination as well as terrorism;

(jj) Integrate a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of national environmental policies, strengthen mechanisms and provide adequate resources to ensure women's full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues, in particular on strategies related to the impact of climate change on the lives of women and girls;

(kk) Strengthen coordination, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency in the United Nations system for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women, including through more effective mainstreaming in all aspects and enhancing its capacity to effectively assist States, at their request, in implementing their programmes on gender equality and the empowerment of women and, to that end, make adequate and reliable human and financial resources available;

(ll) Create and enhance a supportive environment for the mobilization of resources by non-governmental organizations, in particular women's organizations and networks, to enable them to increase their effectiveness and to contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of women, including through assisting in the implementation of the Platform for Action and participating in policy processes and programme delivery;

(mm) Provide assistance to States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, upon their request, to support the implementation of the obligations of States parties under the Convention.

22. The Commission invites the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to continue to give, while exercising its mandated functions, due consideration to financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women in its work.

23. The Commission requests Member States, with a view to strengthening financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women, to integrate gender perspectives in the preparations for and outcome of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, to be held in Qatar in 2008.

B. Draft resolution for adoption by the Council

2. The Commission on the Status of Women recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women*

The Economic and Social Council,

Having considered with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women,[1]

Recalling the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,[2] in particular paragraph 260 concerning Palestinian women and children, the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women,[3] and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[4]

Recalling also its resolution 2007/7 of 24 July 2007 and other relevant United Nations resolutions,

Recalling further the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women[5] as it concerns the protection of civilian populations,

Recalling the importance of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003, on the prevention of armed conflict, and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000, on women and peace and security,

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* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 76-83.

[1] E/CN.6/2008/6.

[2] *Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

[3] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[4] General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[5] See General Assembly resolution 48/104.

Noting the resumption of bilateral negotiations within the Middle East peace process on its agreed basis, and expressing the need for the speedy achievement of a final and comprehensive peace settlement between the Palestinian and Israeli sides,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Concerned about the grave situation of Palestinian women resulting from the severe impact of ongoing illegal Israeli practices, including settlement activities and the unlawful construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, the continued imposition of closures and restrictions on the movement of persons and goods and the many severe consequences arising from Israeli military operations in and sieges of civilian areas, in particular in the Gaza Strip, which have impacted detrimentally their social and economic conditions and deepened the humanitarian crisis faced by them and their families,

Stressing the importance of providing assistance, especially emergency assistance, to alleviate the dire socio-economic and humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women and their families,

Taking note of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights of 31 August 2005[6] regarding Palestinian women giving birth at checkpoints, and expressing grave concern at the increasing difficulties faced by pregnant Palestinian women owing to a lack of appropriate and timely antenatal, delivery and post-natal care due to the obstruction of access to proper medical care,

Recalling the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*,[7] and recalling also General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004,

Recalling also the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[8] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[8] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[9] and affirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing its condemnation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, especially the excessive use of force against Palestinian civilians, many of them women and children, resulting in injury and loss of human life,

Expressing grave concern over the increased difficulties faced by Palestinian women, including the sharp increase in poverty, soaring unemployment, incidents of domestic violence, declining health and education standards as a result of the

[6] A/60/324.

[7] See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1.

[8] General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[9] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

deterioration in the economic and social conditions on the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,

Emphasizing the importance of increasing the role of women in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of conflicts as part of efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of all women in the region,

1. *Calls upon* the concerned parties, as well as the international community, to exert all the necessary efforts to support the resumption of the peace process on its agreed basis, taking into account the common ground already gained, and calls for intensified measures to be taken for the tangible improvement of the difficult situation on the ground and the living conditions faced by Palestinian women and their families;

2. *Reaffirms* that the Israeli occupation remains a major obstacle for Palestinian women with regard to their advancement, self-reliance and integration in the development of their society, and encourages all women in the region to take an active role in supporting the peace process;

3. *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, comply fully with the provisions and principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[10] the Regulations annexed to The Hague Convention IV of 18 October 1907[11] and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949[12] in order to protect the rights of Palestinian women and their families;

4. *Calls upon* Israel to facilitate the return of all refugees and displaced Palestinian women and children to their homes and properties, in compliance with the relevant United Nations resolutions;

5. *Calls upon* the international community to continue to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the dire humanitarian crisis being faced by Palestinian women and their families, to promote their development in various fields and to help in the reconstruction of relevant Palestinian institutions;

6. *Requests* the Commission on the Status of Women to continue to monitor and take action with regard to the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,[2] in particular paragraph 260 concerning Palestinian women and children, the Beijing Platform for Action[3] and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century";[4]

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to review the situation, to assist Palestinian women by all available means, including those laid out in the report of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women, and to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women, at its fifty-third session, a report, including information provided by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

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[10] General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

[11] See Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1915).

[12] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

C. Draft decision for adoption by the Council

3. The Commission on the Status of Women also recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decision:

Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its fifty-second session and provisional agenda and documentation for the fifty-third session of the Commission*

The Economic and Social Council takes note of the report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its fifty-second session and approves the provisional agenda and documentation for the fifty-third session of the Commission set out below:

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

Documentation

Annotated provisional agenda and proposed organization of work of the Commission on the Status of Women

3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century":

(a) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern, and further actions and initiatives;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS

(b) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men;

(c) Gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the priority theme

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of, and assistance to, Palestinian women

Report of the Secretary-General on ending female genital mutilation

Report of the Secretary-General on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS

* For the discussion, see chap. V.

Report of the Secretary-General on the joint workplan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on the activities of the Fund to eliminate violence against women

Note by the Secretariat transmitting the outcome of the forty-third session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

4. Communications concerning the status of women.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the list of confidential communications concerning the status of women

5. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions.

Documentation

Letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women

Note by the Secretariat as input to the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2009 of the Economic and Social Council

6. Provisional agenda for the fifty-fourth session of the Commission.

7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its fifty-third session.

D. Matters brought to the attention of the Council

4. The following resolutions and decisions adopted by the Commission are brought to the attention of the Council:

Resolution 52/1
Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts*

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on the release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts, as well as all resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights concerning hostage-taking and General Assembly resolution 61/172 of 19 December 2006,

* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 65-70.

Recalling also the relevant provisions contained in the instruments of international humanitarian law relative to the protection of the civilian population as such,

Taking into account the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/146 of 17 December 1979, which recognizes that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person and that the taking of hostages is an offence of grave concern to the international community,

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration[13] and Platform for Action,[3] as well as the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[4] and the outcome document of the special session of the Assembly on children entitled "A world fit for children",[14] including the provisions therein regarding violence against women and children, and welcoming the ten-year review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003 on prevention of armed conflict, and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 on women, peace and security, as well as its resolutions 1539 (2004) of 22 April 2004 and 1612 (2005) of 26 July 2005 on children and armed conflict,

Expressing grave concern at the continuation of armed conflicts in many regions throughout the world and the human suffering and humanitarian emergencies they have caused,

Emphasizing that all forms of violence in areas of armed conflict committed against the civilian population as such, including taking women and children hostage, seriously contravene international humanitarian law, in particular as set out in the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949,[15]

Concerned that, despite the efforts of the international community, acts of hostage-taking in different forms and manifestations, inter alia, those committed by terrorists and armed groups, continue to take place and have even increased in many regions of the world,

Recognizing that hostage-taking calls for resolute, firm and concerted efforts on the part of the international community, in conformity with international humanitarian law and in accordance with international human rights standards, in order to bring such abhorrent practices to an end,

Expressing its strong belief that the rapid and unconditional release of women and children taken hostage in areas of armed conflict will promote the implementation of the noble goals enshrined in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, as well as the outcome document of the

[13] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[14] General Assembly resolution S-27/2, annex.

[15] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970-973.

special session of the Assembly on children, entitled "A world fit for children", including the provisions therein regarding violence against women and children,

1. *Reaffirms* that hostage-taking, wherever and by whomever committed, is an illegal act aimed at the destruction of human rights and is, under any circumstances, unjustifiable, including as a means to promote and protect human rights;

2. *Condemns* all violent acts committed against the civilian population as such, in violation of international humanitarian law in situations of armed conflict, and calls for an effective response to such acts, in particular the immediate release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts, including by strengthening international cooperation in this field;

3. *Also condemns* the consequences of hostage-taking, in particular torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, murder, rape, slavery, and trafficking in women and children;

4. *Strongly urges* all parties to armed conflicts to respect fully the norms of international humanitarian law and to take all necessary measures for the protection of the civilian population as such, including measures to prevent and combat acts of hostage-taking, and to release immediately all women and children who have been taken hostage;

5. *Urges* all parties to armed conflicts to provide safe, unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance for those women and children, in accordance with international humanitarian law;

6. *Stresses* both the need to put an end to impunity and the responsibility of all States to prosecute or bring to justice in accordance with international law those responsible for war crimes, including hostage-taking;

7. *Emphasizes* the importance of objective, responsible and impartial information, including sex-disaggregated data, on hostages, verifiable by relevant international organizations, in facilitating their release, and calls for assistance to these organizations in this regard;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure, within the context of the present resolution, the widest possible dissemination of relevant material, in particular material relating to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), within existing resources;

9. *Also requests* the Secretary-General and all relevant international organizations to use their capabilities and undertake efforts to facilitate the immediate release of civilian women and children who have been taken hostage;

10. *Invites* the special rapporteurs with relevant mandates, as well as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, to continue to address the issue of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts and its consequences;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-fourth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including relevant recommendations, taking into account the information provided by States and relevant international organizations;

12. *Decides* to consider the question at its fifty-fourth session.

Resolution 52/2
Ending female genital mutilation*

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 56/128 of 19 December 2001, 58/156 of 22 December 2003 and 60/141 of 16 December 2005, Commission on the Status of Women resolution 51/2 of 9 March 2007 and all other relevant resolutions, as well as all relevant agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women,

Welcoming the initiative taken by the Secretary-General on 25 February 2008 to launch a multi-year campaign to end violence against women,

Reaffirming that the Convention on the Rights of the Child[9] and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[16] together with their Optional Protocols, constitute an important contribution to the legal framework for the protection and promotion of the human rights of girls,

Reaffirming also the Beijing Declaration[17] and Platform for Action,[3] the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[4] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development[18] and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development[19] and their five- and ten-year reviews, as well as the United Nations Millennium Declaration[20] and the commitments relevant to the girl child made at the 2005 World Summit,[21]

Recalling the entry into force on 25 November 2005 of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights[22] on the Rights of Women of Africa, adopted in Maputo on 11 July 2003, which contains, inter alia, undertakings and commitments on ending female genital mutilation and marks a significant milestone towards the abandonment and ending of female genital mutilation,

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* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 71-75.

[16] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

[17] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[18] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[19] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[20] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[21] See General Assembly resolution 60/1.

[22] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1520, No. 26363.

Recalling also general recommendation 14, concerning female circumcision, adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its ninth session;[23] paragraphs 11, 20 and 24 (l) of general recommendation 19, concerning violence against women, adopted by the Committee at its eleventh session;[24] and paragraphs 15 (d) and 18 of general recommendation 24, concerning article 12 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on women and health, adopted by the Committee at its twentieth session;[25] and taking note of paragraphs 21, 35 and 51 of general comment 14 concerning article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[8] adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its twenty-second session,[26]

Recognizing that female genital mutilation violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of the human rights of women and girls,

Recognizing also that female genital mutilation is an irreparable, irreversible abuse that affects one hundred to one hundred and forty million women and girls alive today, and that each year a further three million girls are at risk of undergoing the procedure,

Reaffirming that harmful traditional or customary practices, including female genital mutilation, constitute a serious threat to the health of women and girls, including their psychological, sexual and reproductive health, which can increase their vulnerability to HIV and may have adverse obstetric and prenatal outcomes as well as fatal consequences, and that the abandonment of this harmful practice can be achieved only as a result of a comprehensive movement that involves all public and private stakeholders in society,

Recognizing that negative discriminatory stereotypical attitudes and behaviours have direct implications for the status and treatment of girls and that such negative stereotypes impede the implementation of legislative and normative frameworks that guarantee gender equality and prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General on ending female genital mutilation and the recommendations contained therein,[27]

Welcoming also the in-depth study of the Secretary-General on all forms of violence against women[28] and the report of the independent expert for the United Nations study on violence against children,[29] and taking note of the recommendations contained therein,

Deeply concerned about discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child, which often result in less access for

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[23] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/45/39), chap. IV.

[24] Ibid., *Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/47/38), chap. I.

[25] Ibid., *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/54/38), chap. I.

[26] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 2* (E/2001/22), annex IV.

[27] E/CN.6/2008/3.

[28] A/61/122 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1.

[29] See A/62/209.

girls to education, nutrition and physical and mental health care, in girls enjoying fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence than boys and in their often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence and harmful practices, such as female infanticide, rape, incest, early marriage, forced marriage, prenatal sex selection and female genital mutilation,

Welcoming the call for Africa free of female genital mutilation, pledged at the African Union second Pan-African Forum on Children: midterm review, held in Cairo from 29 October to 2 November 2007, as well as the adoption of the call for accelerated action on the implementation of the Plan of Action towards Africa Fit for Children (2008-2012),[30]

1. *Stresses* that the empowerment of girls is key to breaking the cycle of discrimination and violence and for the promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to the highest attainable standard of mental and physical health, including sexual and reproductive health, and calls upon States parties to fulfil their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child[9] and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[16] as well as their commitments to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women,[5] the Beijing Platform for Action[3] and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[4] and of the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly on children;[14]

2. *Emphasizes* that awareness-raising, community mobilization, education and training are needed to ensure that all key actors, Government officials, including law enforcement and judicial personnel, health-care providers, religious and community leaders, teachers, employers, media professionals and those directly working with girls, as well as parents, families and communities, work to eliminate attitudes and harmful practices that negatively affect girls;

3. *Calls upon* States to strengthen advocacy and awareness-raising programmes, to mobilize girls and boys to take an active part in developing preventive and elimination programmes to address harmful traditional practices, especially female genital mutilation, and to engage communities and religious leaders, educational institutions, the media and families and provide increased financial support to efforts at all levels to end those practices;

4. *Urges* States to condemn all harmful traditional practices, in particular female genital mutilation;

5. *Calls upon* States to strengthen the level of education for women and girls and the capacity of health-care systems to meet their needs in line with the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, as this is critical for empowering them and their communities to end female genital mutilation;

[30] A/62/653, annex.

6. *Urges* States to take all necessary measures, including enacting and enforcing legislation to prohibit female genital mutilation and to protect girls and women from this form of violence, and to end impunity;

7. *Also urges* States to promote, within the general framework of integration policies, effective and specific targeted measures for refugee women and women migrants and their communities, in order to protect girl children from female genital mutilation, including when the practice occurs outside the country of residence;

8. *Further urges* States to promote gender-sensitive, empowering educational processes by, as appropriate, reviewing and revising school curricula, educational materials and teacher-training programmes and elaborating policies and programmes of zero tolerance for violence against girls, including female genital mutilation, and to further integrate a comprehensive understanding of the causes and consequences of such violence against girls into education and training curricula at all levels;

9. *Urges* States to provide education and training on the rights of girls to families, community leaders and members of all professions relevant to the protection and empowerment of girls, such as all levels of health-care providers, social workers, police officers, legal and judicial personnel and prosecutors, in order to increase awareness and commitment to the promotion and protection of the rights of girls and appropriate responses to rights violations with regard to female genital mutilation;

10. *Also urges* States to ensure the national implementation of international and regional commitments and obligations undertaken as States parties or as signatories to various international instruments protecting the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of girls and women, as well as their translation and wide distribution to the population and the judiciary;

11. *Further urges* States to review and, where appropriate, revise, amend or abolish all laws, regulations, policies, practices and customs, in particular female genital mutilation, that discriminate against women or have a discriminatory impact on women and girls and to ensure that provisions of multiple legal systems, where they exist, comply with international human rights obligations, commitments and principles, including the principle of non-discrimination;

12. *Urges* States to develop social and psychological support services and care and to take measures to improve health, including sexual and reproductive health, in order to assist women and girls who are subjected to this violence;

13. *Calls upon* States to develop policies, protocols and rules to ensure the effective implementation of national legislative frameworks on eliminating discrimination and violence against girls, in particular female genital mutilation, and to put in place adequate accountability mechanisms at the national and local levels to monitor adherence to and implementation of these legislative frameworks;

14. *Also calls upon* States to develop unified methods and standards for the collection of data on all forms of discrimination and violence against girls, especially forms that are underdocumented, such as female genital mutilation, and to develop additional indicators to effectively measure progress in eliminating female genital mutilation;

15. *Urges* States to allocate sufficient resources to the implementation of legislation and action plans aimed at abandoning female genital mutilation;

16. *Calls upon* States to develop, support and implement comprehensive and integrated strategies for the prevention of female genital mutilation, including the training of social workers, medical personnel and other relevant professionals, as well as programmes of alternative professional training for the practitioners;

17. *Calls upon* the international community, the relevant United Nations entities and civil society to actively support, through the allocation of appropriate financial resources, targeted, innovative programmes and to disseminate best practices that address the needs and priorities of girls in vulnerable situations, such as that of female genital mutilation, who have difficulty accessing services and programmes, and in this regard welcomes the commitment of ten United Nations agencies in their joint statement of 27 February 2008 to continue working towards the elimination of female genital mutilation by, inter alia, providing technical and financial assistance to achieve this goal;

18. *Encourages* all decision makers, at all levels, with responsibilities for policies, legislation, programmes and allocation of public resources to play leadership roles in eliminating female genital mutilation;

19. *Also encourages* men and boys to continue to take positive initiatives and to work in partnership with women and girls to combat violence against women and girls, in particular female genital mutilation, through networks, peer programmes, information campaigns and training programmes;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that all relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Development Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, individually and collectively, take into account the protection and promotion of the rights of girls against female genital mutilation in their country programmes, as appropriate, and in accordance with national priorities, in order to further strengthen their efforts in this regard;

21. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution using information provided by Member States and verifiable information provided by organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and by non-governmental organizations, with a view to assessing the impact of the present resolution on the well-being of girls.

Resolution 52/3
Strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women*

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling all relevant General Assembly resolutions on the Strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 2007/37 of 25 July 2007, in which the Council reaffirmed the specific mandate of the Institute to conduct research and training for gender equality and the empowerment of women as a central focal point for research and training on gender issues within the United Nations system,

Bearing in mind the request of the Economic and Social Council to increase its cooperation with the Commission on the Status of Women and with other subsidiary bodies of the Council,

Recognizing the contributions of the Institute to the ongoing efforts of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system, in accordance with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, in order to support the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Bearing in mind the strategic framework of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women for the period 2008-2011,

Recalling the research papers prepared by the Institute on the development potential of remittances from a gender perspective, as well as on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women, which constitute valuable inputs to the discussion of the priority theme of the current session of the Commission,

Recognizing the innovative initiatives promoted by the Institute in order to strengthen the cooperation with Governments, the national mechanisms of gender equality and civil society, as well as its ongoing efforts to enhance collaboration with all relevant United Nations bodies in the promotion of the advancement of women and gender equality,

Stressing the importance of strengthening independent research, training and compilation of related databases, which are crucial elements for mainstreaming a gender perspective into policy, planning and implementation,

Expressing satisfaction with the progress that the Institute has made in the area of resource mobilization, which has enabled the Institute to fully reimburse the amount committed by the Secretary-General on an exceptional basis, which was received in 2007, and to increase the level of voluntary funding from various donors,

* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 84-88.

1. *Takes note* of the active participation and valuable contributions of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women to the discussions of the current session of the Commission;

2. *Encourages* the Institute, in accordance with its mandate, to actively participate in the preparatory process for the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, in order to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, in the context of financing for development;

3. *Requests* the Institute, in accordance with its mandate, to collaborate with the United Nations system, national machinery, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in promoting international cooperation to foster women's empowerment and gender equality, including through, inter alia, the promotion of better access to education for women and girls, and the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all policies and programmes;

4. *Also requests* the Institute, within its mandate, to continue to assist countries upon their request, in promoting gender equality and empowerment of women through training programmes;

5. *Stresses* the importance of voluntary financial contributions by Member States to the United Nations Trust Fund for the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women to enable it to carry out its mandate;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide appropriate administrative assistance and support to the Institute, in accordance with the provisions of the statute of the Institute, including by enhancing coordination among the Institute, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Management, in order to ensure that the objectives of the strategic plan, including resource mobilization efforts, are effectively and efficiently carried out;

7. *Recognizes*, in accordance with the decision of the Executive Board of the Institute at its fifth session, the importance of the continuity of the directorship of the Institute;

8. *Decides* to continue considering these issues, and requests the Secretary-General to present a report on the implementation of the present resolution to the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in 2009 through the Commission at its fifty-third session.

Resolution 52/4
Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS*

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration[13] and Platform for Action,[3] the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,[4] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[18] the Declaration of Commitment on

* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 89-94.

HIV/AIDS[31] and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS of 2006,[32] the HIV/AIDS-related goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 2000[20] and the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the aim of Member States to have halted, by 2015, and begun to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS, as well as the commitments on HIV/AIDS made at the 2005 World Summit,

Welcoming the in-depth study of the Secretary-General on all forms of violence against women,[28] and taking note of the recommendations contained therein,

Also welcoming the initiative taken by the Secretary-General on 25 February 2008 to launch a multi-year campaign to end violence against women,

Recalling all previous resolutions on this subject,

Reaffirming that prevention, care, support and treatment for those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS are mutually reinforcing elements of an effective response that must be integrated into a comprehensive approach to combat the epidemic,

Recognizing the need to ensure the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS,

Taking note of the Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights as adopted by the Second International Consultation on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights,[33]

Recognizing that populations destabilized by armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters, including refugees, internally displaced persons and, in particular, women and children, are at an increased risk of exposure to HIV infection and vulnerable to treatment interruption,

Deeply concerned that the global HIV/AIDS pandemic disproportionately affects women and girls and that the majority of new HIV infections occur among young people,

Deeply concerned also by the increased risk of HIV/AIDS facing women and girls with disabilities resulting from, inter alia, social, legal and economic inequalities, sexual and gender-based violence, discrimination and violations of their rights,

Concerned that the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS is increased by their unequal legal, economic and social status, including poverty and other cultural and physiological factors, violence against women and girls and adolescents, early marriage, forced marriage, premature and early sexual relations, sexual exploitation, including for commercial purposes, trafficking and female genital mutilation,

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[31] General Assembly resolution S-26/2, annex.

[32] General Assembly resolution 60/262.

[33] E/CN.4/1997/37, annex I.

Also concerned that HIV infection rates are at least twice as high among young people, especially young and married women, who do not finish primary school as among those who do,

Further concerned that women and girls are more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS and have different and unequal access to the use of health resources for the prevention, treatment, care and support of HIV/AIDS,

Stressing its deep concern that the HIV/AIDS pandemic, with its devastating scale and impact on women and girls, requires urgent action in all fields and at all levels,

Stressing that gender equality and the legal, political, social and economic empowerment of women and girls are fundamental elements in the reduction of their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and are essential to reversing the pandemic,

Expressing its concern that the HIV/AIDS pandemic reinforces gender inequalities, that women and girls are disproportionately affected by the HIV/AIDS crisis, that they are more easily infected, that they bear the disproportionate burden to care for and support those infected and affected by the disease and that they become more vulnerable to poverty as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis,

1. *Reaffirms* the need for Governments, supported by the relevant actors, including civil society and the private sector, to intensify national efforts and international cooperation in the implementation of the commitments contained in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS,[31] the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS,[32] the Beijing Platform for Action[3] and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;[18]

2. *Also reaffirms* the commitment to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, integrating this goal into strategies to attain internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration[20] aimed at reducing maternal mortality, improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty;

3. *Further reaffirms* the commitment to achieve universal access to comprehensive HIV prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010, as set out in the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS;

4. *Stresses* the need to significantly increase and coordinate political and financial commitment to address gender equality and equity in national HIV/AIDS responses, and urges Governments to work towards effectively reflecting in their national policies, strategies and budgets the gender dimension of the pandemic, in line with the time-bound goals of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS;

5. *Urges* Governments to take all necessary measures to create an enabling environment for the empowerment of women, to strengthen their

economic independence, their right to property and inheritance and to protect and promote their full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in order to enable them to protect themselves from HIV infection;

6. *Urges* Governments and other relevant stakeholders to address the challenges faced by older women in accessing HIV prevention, treatment, care and support as well as in caring for people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS, including orphaned grandchildren;

7. *Also urges* Governments and other relevant stakeholders to address the increased risk of HIV/AIDS facing women and girls with disabilities, ensuring their equal access to prevention, treatment, care and support, as an integral part of their HIV/AIDS response;

8. *Emphasizes* the need to strengthen policy and programme linkages and coordination between HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health and their inclusion in national development plans, including poverty reduction strategies and sector-wide approaches, where they exist, as a necessary strategy for fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic and mitigating its impact on the population, which could result in more relevant and cost-effective interventions with greater impact;

9. *Urges* Governments to strengthen initiatives that would increase the capacities of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection, principally through the provision of health care and health services, including for sexual and reproductive health, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and that integrate HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support and include voluntary counselling and testing, including through prevention education that promotes gender equality within a culturally and gender-sensitive framework;

10. *Urges* Governments and other relevant stakeholders to address the situation faced by girls caring for people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS who are often forced to drop out of school;

11. *Urges* Governments to ensure accessible and affordable procurement of prevention commodities, in particular male and female condoms, to ensure that their supply is adequate and secure as well as to promote the ongoing research for safe and effective microbicides;

12. *Reminds* States to consider that flexibilities in trade-related intellectual property rights can be used by States, when necessary, to protect public health and address public health crises;

13. *Urges* Governments to strengthen legal, policy, administrative and other measures for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, including harmful traditional and customary practices, female genital mutilation, abuse, early marriage and forced marriage, rape, including marital rape, and other forms of sexual violence, battering and trafficking in women and girls, and to ensure that violence against women is addressed as an integral part of the national HIV/AIDS response;

14. *Also urges* Governments, where they have not yet done so, to institute and ensure the enforcement of laws to protect women and girls from early and forced marriage and marital rape;

15. *Further urges* Governments to prioritize and expand access to treatment for all people in all settings, in a progressive and sustainable manner, including the prevention and treatment of opportunistic infections and other HIV-related diseases and effective use of and adherence to antiretroviral medication, including through access to clinical and laboratory testing and post-exposure prophylaxis, and to promote access to affordable, high quality, safe and effective drugs and related pharmaceutical products, in particular for women and girls;

16. *Urges* Governments to ensure that women and girls have equitable and sustained access to treatment for HIV/AIDS and opportunistic infections and other HIV-related diseases, appropriate to their age, health and nutritional status, with the full protection of their human rights, including their reproductive rights and sexual health, in accordance with, inter alia, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and other relevant international human rights instruments, and to protection from coerced sexual activity and to monitor access to treatment by age, sex, marital status and continuity of care;

17. *Requests* Governments to promote and provide equal and equitable access for women and men throughout their life cycle to social services related to health care, including education, clean water and safe sanitation, nutrition, food security and health, education programmes and social protection schemes, especially for women and girls living with or affected by HIV/AIDS, including treatment for opportunistic infections and other HIV-related diseases;

18. *Calls upon* Governments to intensify efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls in relation to HIV/AIDS, including through challenging gender stereotypes, stigmatization, discriminatory attitudes and gender inequalities, and to encourage the active involvement of men and boys in this regard;

19. *Stresses* that women should be empowered to protect themselves against violence and that, in this regard, women have the right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including their sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence;

20. *Calls upon* all Governments and the international donor community to integrate a gender perspective in all matters of international assistance and cooperation and to take measures to ensure that resources concomitant with the impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls are made available, in particular in funding provided to national HIV/AIDS programmes to promote and protect the human rights of women and girls in the context of the epidemic, to promote economic opportunities for women, including to diminish their financial vulnerability and risk of exposure to HIV, and to achieve the gender-

related goals found, inter alia, in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS;

21. *Calls upon* Governments to integrate HIV prevention, voluntary counselling and voluntary testing of HIV into other health services, including sexual and reproductive health, family planning, maternity and tuberculosis services, as well as the provision of services for the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections in the mother-to-child transmission services for pregnant women infected by HIV;

22. *Encourages* the continued collaboration among the Secretariat and co-sponsors of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and other international organizations in order to continue to scale up efforts to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, in particular in the context of emergency situations and as part of humanitarian efforts, and to seek actively the achievement of results for women and girls, and also encourages the integration of mainstreaming a gender perspective throughout their work;

23. *Welcomes* the decision of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to scale up a gender-sensitive response to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in order to address the vulnerabilities of women and girls to HIV infection;

24. *Requests* the Secretariat and co-sponsors of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and other United Nations agencies responding to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, including the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, to mainstream a gender and human rights perspective throughout their HIV/AIDS-related operations, including policy, planning, monitoring and evaluation, and to ensure that programmes and policies are developed and adequately resourced to address the specific needs of women and girls;

25. *Encourages* the United Nations to continue to support national monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the context of the "three ones" principles, to enable the production and dissemination of comprehensive and timely information on the gender dimension of the pandemic, including through the collection of data disaggregated by sex, age and marital status, and to raise awareness about the critical intersection between gender inequality and HIV/AIDS;

26. *Requests* the Secretary-General to invite Member States to work in partnership with the Global Coalition on Women and HIV/AIDS, convened by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and its partners, to mobilize and support a wide range of national actors, including women's groups and networks of women living with HIV/AIDS, in order to ensure that national HIV/AIDS programmes are better able to respond to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls and adolescents;

27. *Urges* Governments to rapidly scale up access to treatment programmes to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and to encourage men to participate with women in programmes designed to prevent mother-to-child transmission, to encourage women and girls to participate in these

programmes and to provide sustained treatment and care for the mother after pregnancy, including care and support for the family;

28. *Encourages* the design and implementation of programmes, including awareness-raising programmes, to encourage and enable men, including young men, to adopt safe, non-coercive and responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour and to use effective methods to prevent the transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections;

29. *Stresses* the importance of ensuring that young men and women have access to information and education, including peer education and youth-specific HIV education, sexual education and services necessary for behavioural change, to enable them to develop the life skills required to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection and reproductive ill health, in full partnership with young persons, parents, families, educators and health-care providers;

30. *Calls* for enhanced efforts by all relevant actors to include a gender perspective in the development of HIV/AIDS programmes and policies and in the training of personnel involved in implementing such programmes, including by focusing on the role of men and boys in addressing HIV/AIDS;

31. *Encourages* Governments and all other relevant actors to promote funding, both domestically and externally, and to support and expedite action-oriented research leading to affordable, safe and effective methods controlled by women to prevent HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, including microbicides and vaccines and research on strategies that empower women to protect themselves from sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, and methods of care, support and treatment for women of various ages, and to promote their involvement in all aspects of such research;

32. *Encourages* Governments to increase the provision of resources and facilities to women who find themselves having to provide care and/or economic support for those infected with HIV/AIDS or affected by the pandemic and to address the challenges faced by the survivors and caregivers, in particular children and older persons, utilizing funds earmarked for care and support to reduce women's disproportionate burden of care as well as to provide the balanced sharing of the provisions of care by both men and women;

33. *Urges* Governments to continue to promote the participation and the significant contribution of people living with HIV/AIDS, young people and civil society actors, in particular women's organizations, in addressing the problem of HIV/AIDS in all its aspects, including promoting a gender perspective, and to promote their full involvement and participation in the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of HIV/AIDS programmes, as well as in creating an enabling environment to combat stigmatization;

34. *Also urges* Governments to ensure that the dignity, rights and privacy of people living with HIV/AIDS, in particular women and girls, are protected;

35. *Urges* Governments, the donor community and relevant entities of the United Nations system to prioritize programmes addressing the specific

needs of women and girls in HIV response and ensuring resources to support the development of capacities of women's organizations for HIV programme development and implementation and to streamline funding procedures and requirements that will facilitate resource flows to community-level services;

36. *Also urges* Governments, the donor community and relevant entities of the United Nations system to ensure that gender equality implications are a key component of research, implementation and evaluation of new prevention methods and that such new prevention methods are part of a comprehensive approach to HIV prevention that protects and supports the rights of women and girls;

37. *Welcomes* the financial contributions made to date to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, urges further contributions to sustain the Fund, and calls upon all countries to encourage the private sector to contribute to the Fund;

38. *Stresses* the importance of building up national competence and capacity to provide an assessment of the drivers and impact of the epidemic, which should be used in planning for comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care and support and for mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS;

39. *Urges* the international community to complement and supplement, through increased international development assistance, efforts of the developing countries that commit increased national funds to fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic, especially to address the needs of women and girls, in particular those countries most affected by HIV/AIDS, particularly in Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa, and in the Caribbean, countries at high risk of expansion of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and countries in other affected regions whose resources for dealing with the epidemic are seriously limited;

40. *Invites* the Secretary-General to take into account the disproportionate impact of HIV/AIDS on women and the gender dimensions of the epidemic when preparing the report requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/178 of 19 December 2007 and in making all preparations for and in the organization of the 2008 high-level meeting for a comprehensive review of the progress achieved in realizing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS;

41. *Recommends* that the 2008 comprehensive review meeting take measures to ensure the inclusion of gender-equality perspectives throughout its deliberations and that it pay attention to the situation of women and girls infected or affected by HIV/AIDS;

42. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the fifty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women on the implementation of the present resolution by using information provided by Member States, relevant entities of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, with a view to assessing the impact of the present resolution in addressing the feminization of HIV/AIDS.

Decision 52/101
Future work of the Working Group on Communications*

At its 15th meeting, on 6 March 2008, the Commission on the Status of Women decided to postpone its consideration of the future work of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women until its fifty-third session and requested the Secretary-General to prepare for that purpose an addendum to the report on the future work of the Working Group,[34] compiling additional or updated written views of Member States.

Decision 52/102
Documents considered by the Commission on the Status of Women under agenda item 3**

At its 16th meeting, on 7 March 2008, the Commission on the Status of Women decided to take note of the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women;[35]

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on forced marriage of the girl child;[36]

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women;[37]

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts;[38]

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on the joint workplan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;[39]

(f) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on the activities to eliminate violence against women.[40]

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* For the discussion, see chap. III, paras. 2-7.
** For the discussion, see chap. II, para. 95.
[34] E/CN.6/2004/11 and Add.1 and 2.
[35] E/CN.6/2008/2.
[36] E/CN.6/2008/4.
[37] E/CN.6/2008/5.
[38] E/CN.6/2007/7.
[39] A/HRC/7/52-E/CN.6/2007/8.
[40] A/HRC/7/53-E/CN.6/2008/9.

Chapter II

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

1. The Commission considered item 3 of the agenda at its 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 15th, 16th and resumed 16th meetings, from 25 to 29 February and on 3, 5, 6 and 7 March 2008. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women (E/CN.6/2008/2);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on ending female genital mutilation (E/CN.6/2008/3);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on forced marriage of the girl child (E/CN.6/2008/4);

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes with a particular focus on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women (E/CN.6/2008/5);

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (E/CN.6/2008/6);

(f) Report of the Secretary-General on release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts (E/CN.6/2008/7);

(g) Report of the Secretary-General on the joint workplan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/HRC/7/52-E/CN.6/2008/8);

(h) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on the activities of the Fund to eliminate violence against women (A/HRC/7/53-E/CN.6/2008/9);

(i) Statements submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (E/CN.6/2008/NGO/1-39);

(j) Note by the Secretariat transmitting the results of the fortieth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (E/CN.6/2008/CRP.1);

(k) Note by the Bureau of the Commission on the Status of Women: discussion guide on the high-level round table on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women (E/CN.6/2008/CRP.3);

(l) Note by the Secretary-General on the strategic framework for the biennium 2010-2011: subprogramme 2, Gender issues and advancement of women (E/CN.6/2008/CRP.4).

2. At the 2nd meeting, on 25 February, introductory statements were made by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

3. At the 6th meeting, on 27 February, introductory statements were made by the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women; the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women; and the Executive Director ad interim of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

4. At its 2nd, 6th, 7th, 8th, 11th and 12th meetings, on 25, 27 and 28 February and 3 March, the Commission held a general discussion on agenda item 3.

5. At the 2nd meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Iceland, the Dominican Republic (on behalf of the Rio Group), the Sudan, Mexico and Togo.

6. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the observers for Antigua and Barbuda (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Ukraine and Armenia), Sweden, Côte d'Ivoire and Argentina (on behalf of MERCOSUR).

7. Also at the 2nd meeting, statements were made by the Director of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

8. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Zambia (on behalf of the Southern African Development Community), Ghana, Zambia (national statement), Brazil, Suriname, the United Republic of Tanzania, Indonesia and Mauritius and by the observers for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa, Finland, Botswana, Tuvalu, the Bahamas, the Czech Republic, Liberia and the Russian Federation.

9. At the 7th meeting, on 27 February, statements were made by the representatives of Paraguay, the Niger, Mali, Ecuador, the United States of America, Azerbaijan, Hungary and Namibia and by the observers for Ireland, Nigeria, Honduras, Senegal, Chile, Yemen, Norway, Poland, Argentina, Tonga (on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Egypt, Colombia, Angola, Costa Rica and Australia.

10. At the 8th meeting, on 28 February, statements were made by the representatives of Turkey, Japan, Cambodia, the Netherlands, Spain, Pakistan, Malaysia and Armenia and by the observers for the Syrian Arab Republic, Israel, Zimbabwe, Burundi, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kenya, Jamaica, Viet Nam, Kuwait, Thailand, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Barbados, Lebanon, the Philippines, Fiji, Denmark, Malta, Uganda and Portugal.

11. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations: the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie.

12. Also at the 8th meeting, a statement was made by the representative of a non-governmental organization, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, who spoke also on behalf of Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, UNAMINA International, Mouvement pour l'abolition de la prostitution et de la pornographie et de toutes formes de violences sexuelles et discrimination sexistes, and by the representative of Asia Pacific Women's Caucus.

13. At the 11th meeting, on 3 March, statements were made by the representatives of the Republic of Korea, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Morocco, El Salvador and Lesotho and by the observers for Myanmar, Bangladesh, Guinea, Switzerland, Belarus, Cuba, Nicaragua, Jordan, Austria, Estonia, Liechtenstein and the Solomon Islands.

14. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the observer of the Holy See.

15. Also at the same meeting, the representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations made statements: the African Union, the European Commission and the Economic Community of West African States.

16. Also at the 11th meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

17. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of non-governmental organizations, on behalf of the African Women's Caucus, the West Asia Women's Caucus and the International Network of Liberal Women.

18. At the 12th meeting, on 3 March, statements were made by the representatives of Croatia, China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Cameroon and Peru and by the observers for Afghanistan, the Gambia, India, France, Haiti, Italy, Papua New Guinea and Nepal.

19. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the observer for Palestine.

20. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the observers for the intergovernmental organizations International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

21. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (on behalf of the United Nations regional commissions).

22. Also at the 12th meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the following non-governmental organizations: Girls Caucus and World Youth Alliance, Association for the Advancement of Retired Persons, Amnesty International (also on behalf of Asia Pacific Women's Watch, Association for Women's Rights in Development, Centre for Women's Global Leadership, Women's Environment and Development Organization, Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era, International Planned Parenthood Federation and Network Women in Development Europe), Latin America and the Caribbean Women's Caucus, International Council of Women and the Association for Progressive Communications (on behalf of, inter alia, Humanist Committee on Human Rights, Isis-Women's International Cross

Cultural Exchange, the International Information Centre and Archives for the Women's Movement and the International Women's Tribune).

Strategic framework for the biennium 2010-2011: Subprogramme 2: Gender issues and advancement of women

23. At the 15th meeting, on 6 March, the Commission had before it a note by the Secretary-General on the strategic framework for the biennium 2010-2011: Subprogramme 2: Gender issues and advancement of women (E/CN.6/2008/CRP.4).

24. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the Assistant Secretary-General for Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, in which she made oral corrections to the note on the strategic framework (E/CN.6/2008/CRP.4).

25. At the same meeting, statements were made by the observers from Cuba and the Russian Federation, to which the Assistant Secretary-General for Gender Issues and Advancement of Women responded.

Agenda item 3 (a) (i) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women

26. At its 3rd meeting, on 25 February, the Commission held parallel high-level round tables on the theme "Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women".

High-level round table A

27. The Commission held a high-level round table chaired by Oliver Belle (Belgium), the Chairperson of the Commission.

28. A statement was made by the Director of Studies and Financial Forecasts of the Ministry of Finance and Privatization of Morocco, Mr. Mohamed Chafiki, as keynote speaker.

29. The delegations of the following countries participated: Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Egypt, Ghana, Greece, Iceland, Indonesia, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Senegal, Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union), Suriname, Switzerland, Uganda, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

30. Representatives of UNIFEM and the Financing for Development Office, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, also participated.

31. The representatives of the following non-governmental organizations also participated: Bahá'i International, International Trade Union Confederation and the NGO Committee on the UNICEF Working Group on Girls.

32. At its 16th meeting, on 7 March, the Commission took note of the moderator's summary of the high-level round table.[1]

High-level round table B

33. The Commission held a high-level round table chaired by Iya Tidjani (Cameroon.).

34. A statement was made by Mr. Dionisio Pérez Jácome Frincione, Vice-Minister of Expenditures, Ministry of Finance, Mexico, as keynote speaker.

35. The delegations of the following countries participated: Argentina, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Finland, Honduras, Kenya, New Zealand, the Niger, the Republic of Korea, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Viet Nam and Zambia.

36. Representatives of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and ILO also participated.

37. The representatives of the following non-governmental organizations also participated: Humanistisch Instituut voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, Development Alternatives for Women in a New Era and African Women's Development and Communication Network.

38. At its 16th meeting, on 7 March, the Commission took note of the moderator's summary of the high-level round table.[1]

Panel discussions under agenda 3 (a) (i)
Key policy initiatives on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women

39. At its 4th meeting, on 26 February, the Commission held a panel discussion on "Key policy initiatives on financing gender equality and the empowerment of women".

40. Presentations were made by Isabella Bakker, Professor of Political Science at York University, Canada; Mireille Bruning-Stolz, Head of the Annual Reports Division, Central Bank of Suriname; Mayra Buvinic, Sector Director for Gender and Development, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network of the World Bank; Lydia Alpízar Durán, Executive Director of the Association for Women's Rights in Development; Caren Grown, Economist-in-Residence in the Department of Economics, American University, Washington, D.C.; and Dubravka Šimonović, Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women.

41. The Commission then held a dialogue with the panellists, in which the following delegations participated: Australia, Azerbaijan, Canada, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ghana, Honduras, Indonesia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, New Zealand,

[1] See http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/52sess.htm.

Paraguay, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union), South Africa, the Sudan, Suriname, Thailand, Turkey and Yemen.

42. A representative of a non-governmental organization, speaking on behalf of Education International, the International Trade Union Confederation and Public Services International, also participated in the dialogue.

43. At its 16th meeting, on 7 March, the Commission took note of the moderator's summary of the panel discussion.[1]

Panel discussion under agenda 3 (a) (ii) Women's participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding

44. At its 10th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission held a panel discussion on "Women's participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding", with Oliver Belle (Belgium), Chairperson of the Commission, as the moderator.

45. Presentations were made by Carolyn McAskie, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support; and Ms. Gina Tory, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

46. The Commission then held a dialogue with the panellists, in which the following delegations participated: Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, El Salvador, Finland, France, Ghana, Haiti, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Niger, Papua New Guinea (on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum), the Republic of Korea, Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union), South Africa, Spain, the Sudan, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

47. The representative of UNIFEM participated in the dialogue.

48. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations also participated in the dialogue: Plan International Inc. and International Women's Tribune Centre, speaking on behalf of the Women in Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution Thematic Caucus.

49. At its 16th meeting, on 7 March, the Commission took note of the moderator's summary of the panel discussion.[1]

Panel discussion on agenda item 3 (b) Gender perspectives on climate change

50. At its 9th meeting, on 28 February, the Commission held an expert panel discussion on "Gender perspectives on climate change".

51. Presentations were made by Minu Hemmati, gender cc-Women for Climate Justice; Lorena Aguilar, Senior Gender Adviser to the World Conservation Union; Anastasia Pinto, an indigenous woman of the Meitei nation in India; Ms. Rachel Nampinga, Programme Director for Eco-Watch Africa; and Ms. Sri Woro Harijono, Head of the Meteorological and Geophysical Agency, Indonesia, and Vice-President

of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Regional Association V (Southwest Pacific).

52. The Commission then held a dialogue with the panellists, in which the following delegations participated: Bangladesh, Belgium, China, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Indonesia, Israel, Kiribati, Mauritius, Mexico, the Netherlands, the Niger, the Republic of Korea, Spain, the Sudan, Suriname, Switzerland and Zambia.

53. The representative of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources participated in the dialogue.

54. The representative of Zenab for Women in Development, a non-governmental organization, also participated in the dialogue.

55. At its 16th meeting, on 7 March, the Commission took note of the moderator's summary of the panel discussion.[1]

Panel discussion on agenda item 3 (c) Capacity-building on mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes for financing gender equality and the empowerment of women

56. At its 5th meeting, on 26 February, the Commission held a panel discussion on "Capacity-building on mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes for financing gender equality and the empowerment of women".

57. Presentations were made by Marème Cissé Thiam, Director of Female Entrepreneurship, Ministry of the Family, Female Entrepreneurship and Microfinance, Senegal; Olga Filippova, Social and Gender Policy Expert, Department of Social and Economic Policy, Office of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic; Purnima Mane, Deputy Executive Director (programme), UNFPA; Julia Benn, Manager of the Statistical Policy, Analysis and Outreach Section, Development Cooperation Directorate, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; and Shireen Lateef, Director of Social Sectors, South-East Asia Department, Asian Development Bank.

58. The Commission then held a dialogue with the panellists, in which the following delegations participated: Burundi, Canada, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Fiji, Indonesia, New Zealand, the Niger, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union), Togo and Zambia.

59. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations also participated in the dialogue: "Project Five-O"; Fédération européenne des femmes actives au foyer; and Human Rights Advocates, Inc.

60. At its 16th meeting, on 7 March, the Commission took note of the moderator's summary of the panel discussion.[1]

Action taken by the Commission
Agreed conclusions on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women

61. At its resumed 16th meeting, on 13 March, the Vice-Chairperson of the Commission, Julio Peralta (Paraguay), reported on the outcome of informal consultations on the agreed conclusions on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women, and introduced the draft agreed conclusions (E/CN.6/2008/L.8).

62. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the observer for Cuba.

63. Also at the 16th meeting, the Commission adopted the draft conclusions, as orally corrected, and decided to transmit them to the General Assembly as an input into the preparations for the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus (see chap. I, sect. A).

64. After the adoption of the agreed conclusions, statements were made by the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America, as well as by the observers for Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union) and Chile.

Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts

65. At the 13th meeting, on 5 March, the representative of Azerbaijan introduced a draft resolution entitled "Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts" (E/CN.6/2008/L.1).

66. At the 16th meeting, on 7 March, the Commission was informed that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

67. At the same meeting, the representative of Azerbaijan orally revised the text of the draft resolution as follows:

(a) In operative paragraph 4, the words "prevent, combat and punish acts of hostage-taking" were revised to read "prevent and combat acts of hostage-taking";

(b) In operative paragraph 6, the words "or to bring to justice" were inserted in between the words "prosecute" and "in accordance with international law".

68. Also at the same meeting, the representative of Azerbaijan made a statement and announced that Armenia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Georgia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Morocco and Uzbekistan had joined in sponsoring the draft resolution. Subsequently, Kazakhstan, Mozambique, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation and Turkey joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, as orally revised.

69. Also at the 16th meeting, the Commission adopted the draft resolution, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. D, resolution 52/1).

70. After the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the representative of the United States.

Ending female genital mutilation

71. At the 13th meeting, on 5 March, the observer for Cape Verde, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States, and Chile, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Ending female genital mutilation" (E/CN.6/2008/L.2), which reads as follows:

"*The Commission on the Status of Women*,

"*Recalling* General Assembly resolutions, 56/128 of 19 December 2001, 58/156 of 22 December 2003 and 60/141 of 16 December 2005, 51/2 of the Commission on the Status of Women, and all other relevant resolutions, as well as all relevant agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women,

"*Reaffirming* that the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, together with their Optional Protocols, constitute an important contribution to the legal framework for the protection and promotion of the human rights of girls,

"*Reaffirming also* the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century', the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and their five and ten-year reviews, as well as the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the commitments relevant to the girl child made at the 2005 World Summit,

"*Recalling* the entry into force of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women of Africa, adopted in Maputo on 11 July 2003, which contains, inter alia, undertakings and commitments on ending female genital mutilation and marks a significant milestone towards the abandonment and ending of female genital mutilation,

"*Recalling also* general recommendation 14, concerning female circumcision, adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its ninth session; paragraphs 11, 20 and 24 (l) of general recommendation 19, concerning violence against women, adopted by the Committee at its eleventh session; paragraphs 15 (d) and 18 of general recommendation 24, concerning article 12 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on women and health, adopted by the Committee at its twentieth session, and taking note of paragraphs 21, 35, and 51 of general recommendation 14 concerning article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its twenty-second session,

"*Recognizing* that female genital mutilation violates, and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of the human rights of women and girls,

"*Recognizing also* that female genital mutilation is an irreparable, irreversible abuse that affects one hundred to one hundred and forty million

women and girls alive today, and that each year a further two million girls are at risk of undergoing the procedure,

"*Reaffirming* that harmful traditional or customary practices, including female genital mutilation, constitute a serious threat to the health of women and girls, including their psychological, sexual and reproductive health, which can increase their vulnerability to HIV and may have adverse obstetric and prenatal outcomes as well as fatal consequences, and that the abandonment of this harmful practice can be achieved only as a result of a comprehensive movement that involves all public and private stakeholders in society,

"*Noting* that negative discriminatory stereotypical attitudes and behaviours have direct implications for the status and treatment of girls and that such negative stereotypes impede the implementation of legislative and normative frameworks that guarantee gender equality and prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex,

"*Noting also* the report of the Secretary-General on ending female genital mutilation, as well as the report transmitted by the Secretary-General on violence against children and the report of the Secretary-General on violence against women, and the recommendations contained therein, on ending female genital mutilation,

"*Deeply concerned* about discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child, which often result in less access for girls to education, nutrition and physical and mental health care, in girls enjoying fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence than boys and in their often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence and harmful practices, such as female infanticide, rape, incest, early marriage, forced marriage, prenatal sex selection and female genital mutilation,

"*Welcoming* the 'Call for Africa Free of Female Genital Mutilation', pledged at the Second Pan-African Forum on the Africa Common Position for Children: Mid-term Review, held in Cairo from 29 October to 2 November 2007, for the adoption of the Call for Accelerated Action on the Implementation of the Plan of Action towards Africa Fit for Children, 2008-2012,

"1. *Stresses* that the empowerment of girls is key to breaking the cycle of discrimination and violence and for the promotion and protection of human rights, and calls upon States parties to fulfil their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as their commitment to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century', and of the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly on children;

"2. *Emphasizes* that awareness-raising, community mobilization, education and training are needed to ensure that all key actors, government officials, including law enforcement and judicial personnel, health-care providers, teachers, employers, media professionals and those directly working

with girls, as well as parents, families and communities, work to eliminate attitudes and harmful practices that negatively affect girls;

"3. *Calls upon* States to strengthen advocacy and awareness-raising programmes, to mobilize girls and boys to take an active part in developing preventive and elimination programmes to address harmful traditional practices, especially female genital mutilation, and to engage communities and religious leaders, educational institutions, the media and families and provide increased financial support to efforts at all levels to end these practices;

"4. *Urges* States to condemn all harmful traditional practices, in particular female genital mutilation;

"5. *Also urges* States to promote, within the general framework of integration policies, effective and specific targeted measures for refugee women and women migrants and their communities, in order to protect girl children from female genital mutilation, including when the practice occurs outside the country of residence;

"6. *Further urges* States to promote gender-sensitive, empowering educational processes, by, as appropriate, reviewing and revising school curricula, educational materials and teacher-training programmes, and elaborating policies and programmes of zero tolerance for violence against girls, including female genital mutilation, and to further integrate a comprehensive understanding of the causes and consequences of such violence against girls into education and training curricula at all levels;

"7. *Urges* States to provide education and training on the rights of girls to families, community leaders and members of all professions relevant to the protection and empowerment of girls, such as all levels of health-care providers, social workers, police officers, legal and judicial personnel and prosecutors, in order to increase awareness and commitment to the promotion and protection of the rights of girls and appropriate responses to rights violations with regard to female genital mutilation;

"8. *Also urges* States to ensure the national implementation of international and regional commitments and obligations undertaken as States parties or as signatories to various international instruments protecting the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of girls and women as well as their translation and wide distribution to the population and the judiciary;

"9. *Further urges* States to review and, where appropriate, revise, amend or abolish all laws, regulations, policies, practices and customs, in particular female genital mutilation, that discriminate against women or have a discriminatory impact on women and girls and to ensure that provisions of multiple legal systems, where they exist, comply with international human rights obligations, commitments and principles, including the principle of non-discrimination;

"10. *Urges* States to take all necessary measures, including enacting and enforcing legislation to prohibit female genital mutilation and protect girls and women from this form of violence, and to end impunity;

"11. *Also urges* States to develop social and psychological support services and care and to take measures to improve health, including sexual and reproductive health, in order to assist women and girls who are subjected to this violence;

"12. *Calls upon* States to develop policies, protocols and rules to ensure the effective implementation of national legislative frameworks on eliminating discrimination and violence against girls, in particular female genital mutilation, and to put in place adequate accountability mechanisms at national and local levels to monitor adherence to, and implementation of, these legislative frameworks;

"13. *Also calls upon* States to develop unified methods and standards for data collection on all forms of discrimination and violence against girls, especially forms that are underdocumented such as female genital mutilation, and to develop additional indicators to effectively measure progress in eliminating female genital mutilation;

"14. *Urges* States to allocate sufficient resources to the implementation of legislation and action plans aimed at abandoning female genital mutilation;

"15. *Calls upon* States to develop, support and implement comprehensive and integrated strategies for the prevention of female genital mutilation, including the training of social workers, medical personnel and other relevant professionals, as well as programmes of alternative professional training for the practitioners;

"16. *Calls upon* the international community, the relevant United Nations entities and civil society to actively support, through the allocation of appropriate financial resources, targeted, innovative programmes and to disseminate best practices that address the needs and priorities of girls in vulnerable situations, such as that of female genital mutilation, who have difficulties accessing services and programmes, and in this regard welcomes the commitment of the ten United Nations agencies reflected in their joint statement pledging to continue working towards the elimination of female genital mutilation through, inter alia, providing technical and financial assistance to achieve this goal;

"17. *Encourages* all decision makers, at all levels, with responsibilities for policies, legislation, programmes and allocation of public resources to play leadership roles in eliminating female genital mutilation;

"18. *Encourages* men and boys to continue to take positive initiatives and to work in partnership with women and girls to combat violence against women and girls, in particular female genital mutilation, through networks, peer programmes, information campaigns and training programmes;

"19. *Requests* the Secretary-General, to ensure that all relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Development Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, individually and collectively, take into

account the protection and promotion of the rights of girls against female genital mutilation in their country programmes, as appropriate, and in accordance with national priorities, in order to further strengthen their efforts in this regard;

"20. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the fifty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women on the implementation of the present resolution by using information provided by Member States and verifiable information provided by organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and by non-governmental organizations, with a view to assessing the impact of the present resolution on the well-being of girls."

72. At the 16th meeting, on 7 March, the Commission had before it a revised draft resolution submitted by the observer for Cape Verde, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States, which was contained in an informal paper in English only. The revised draft resolution was subsequently issued as E/CN.6/2008/L.2/Rev.1.

73. Also at the same meeting, the observer for Cape Verde announced that Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Luxembourg, Moldova, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom had joined in sponsoring the revised draft resolution. Subsequently, Andorra, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Ireland, Italy, Monaco, New Zealand, Panama, Peru, the Republic of Korea and Slovakia joined in sponsoring the revised draft resolution.

74. Also at the same meeting, the Commission adopted the revised draft resolution (see chap. I, sect. D, resolution 52/2).

75. After the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the representative of Iran (Islamic Republic of).

Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

76. At the 13th meeting, on 5 March, the observer for Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women" (E/CN.6/2008/L.3).

77. At its 16th meeting, on 7 March, the Commission was advised that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

78. At the same meeting, the observer for Antigua and Barbuda orally revised the text of the draft resolution as follows:

(a) In the sixth preambular paragraph, the words "and comprehensive" were inserted in between the words "final" and "peace settlement";

(b) After the sixth preambular paragraph, a new paragraph was inserted, which read:

"*Reaffirming* the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and *stressing* the importance of their equal participation and involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and

promotion of peace and security and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution";

(c) In the seventh preambular paragraph, the words "in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem," were deleted after the words "concerned about the grave situation of Palestinian women"; and the words "in particular in the Gaza Strip" were inserted after the words "seizes civilian areas";

(d) The ninth preambular paragraph, which read:

"*Taking note* of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights of 31 August 2005, regarding Palestinian women giving birth at Israeli checkpoints owing to denial of access to hospitals, and stressing the need to call for an end to this practice,"

was replaced by a new paragraph, which read as follows:

"*Taking note* of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, of 31 August 2005, regarding Palestinian women giving birth at checkpoints, and expressing grave concern at the increasing difficulties faced by pregnant Palestinian women owing to a lack of appropriate and timely antenatal, delivery and post-natal care due to the obstruction of access to proper medical care";

(e) After the twelfth preambular paragraph, a new paragraph was inserted, which read as follows:

"*Expressing grave concern* over the increased difficulties faced by Palestinian women, including the sharp increase in poverty, soaring unemployment, incidents of domestic violence, declining health and education standards as a result of the deterioration in the economic and social conditions on the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territory";

(f) In operative paragraph 5 the words "to promote their development in various fields" were inserted in between the words "Palestinian women and their families," and "and to help in the reconstruction of relevant Palestinian institutions";

79. At the same meeting, Azerbaijan joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, as orally revised.

80. Also at its 16th meeting, the Commission adopted the draft resolution, as orally revised, by a recorded vote of 33 to 1, with 9 abstentions (see chap. I, sect. B). The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belize, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Gabon, Ghana, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Lesotho, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, the Niger, Pakistan, Peru, Qatar, Spain, Suriname, Togo, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia.

Against:

United States of America.

Abstain:

Belgium, Cameroon, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

81. Before the adoption of the draft resolution, statements in explanation of vote were made by the representatives of the United States and Germany (on behalf of the European Union). A statement was also made by the observer for Israel.

82. After the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the observer for Mauritania.

83. A statement was also made by the observer for Palestine.

Strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

84. At the 13th meeting, on 5 March, the observer for Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women" (E/CN.6/2008/L.4) and orally corrected it by replacing the words "The Economic and Social Council" by the words "The Commission on the Status of Women".

85. At the 16th meeting, on 7 March, the Commission was informed that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

86. At the same meeting, the observer for Antigua and Barbuda orally revised the text of the draft resolution as follows:

(a) After the seventh preambular paragraph, a new paragraph was inserted, which read as follows:

"*Stressing* the importance of strengthening independent research, training and compilation of related databases, which are crucial elements for mainstreaming a gender perspective into policy, planning and implementation";

(b) The eighth preambular paragraph, which read:

"*Expressing satisfaction* with the progress the Institute has made in the area of resource mobilization, which has enabled it to repay the subventions received in 2007 and increase the level of voluntary funding from various donors"

was revised to read:

"*Expressing satisfaction* with the progress the Institute has made in the area of resource mobilization, which has enabled the Institute to fully reimburse the amount committed by the Secretary-General on an exceptional basis, which was received in 2007, and to increase the level of voluntary funding from various donors";

(c) In operative paragraph 1, the words "*Notes* the active participation" were replaced by the words "*Takes note* of the active participation";

(d) In operative paragraph 2, the words "*Requests* the Institute" were replaced by the words "*Encourages* the Institute";

(e) Operative paragraph 6, which read:

"*Requests* the Secretary-General, in accordance with the decision of the Executive Board of the Institute at its fifth session, to continue to provide appropriate administrative assistance and support to the Institute, including by strengthening the coordination among the Institute, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Management of the United Nations Secretariat, and other relevant entities within the United Nations system, and ensuring continuity in the directorship of the Institute, in accordance with the provisions of the statute of the Institute"

was revised to read:

"*Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide appropriate administrative assistance and support to the Institute, in accordance with the provisions of the statute of the Institute, including by enhancing coordination among the Institute, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Management, in order to ensure that the objectives of the strategic plan, including resource mobilization efforts, are effectively and efficiently carried out";

(f) After operative paragraph 6, a new paragraph was inserted, which read as follows:

"*Recognizes*, in accordance with the decision of the Executive Board of the Institute at its fifth session, the importance of the continuity of the directorship of the Institute";

and the remaining paragraphs were renumbered;

(g) In operative paragraph 7, the words "during its fifty-third session" were replaced by the words "to the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in 2009 through the Commission at its fifty-third session".

87. Subsequently, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Croatia, Gabon, Israel, Italy, Mexico, Slovakia and Spain joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, as orally revised.

88. Also at the 16th meeting, the Commission adopted the draft resolution, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. D, resolution 52/3).

Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS

89. At the 13th meeting, on 5 March, the representative of Zambia, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Southern African Development Community, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS" (E/CN.6/2008/L.5). Subsequently, Cape Verde and Chile joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

90. At the 16th meeting, on 7 March, the Commission was informed that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

91. At the same meeting, the Commission had before it a revised draft resolution, entitled "Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS", in an informal paper in English only submitted by Zambia on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Southern African Development Community.

92. At the same meeting, the representative of Zambia announced that Albania, Austria, Benin, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Ireland, Japan, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia and the United Kingdom had joined in sponsoring the revised draft resolution. Subsequently, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Belize, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Gabon, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Peru, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Senegal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Togo and Turkey joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, as orally revised.

93. Also at the 16th meeting, the Commission adopted the revised draft resolution (see chap. I, sect. D, resolution 52/4).

94. After the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Documents considered by the Commission on the Status of Women under agenda item 3

95. At its 16th meeting, on 7 March 2008, the Commission decided to take note of a number of documents under agenda item 3 (see chap. I, sect. D, draft decision 52/102).

Chapter III
Communications concerning the status of women

1. The Commission considered item 4 of the agenda at its 13th to 16th meetings on 5, 6, and 7 March 2008. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the list of confidential communications concerning the status of women (E/CN.6/2008/SW/COMM.LIST/42/R);

(b) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the list of confidential communications concerning the status of women (E/CN.6/2008/SW/COMM.LIST/42/Add.1);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the future work of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2004/11 and Add.1 and 2);

(d) Report of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2008/CRP.5).

Action taken by the Commission

Future work of the Working Group on Communications concerning the Status of Women

2. At its 13th meeting, on 5 March, the Commission began its consideration of the question of the future work of the Working Group on Communications.

3. At the same meeting, the Vice-Chairperson, Enna Park (Republic of Korea), made a statement in which she proposed an oral draft decision on the future work of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women, as follows:

> "The Commission on the Status of Women decides to postpone its consideration of the future work of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women until its fifty-third session and requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report for that purpose, which should include the written views of Member States."

4. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Malaysia, Iceland and Croatia, and by the observers for Cuba and the Russian Federation.

5. At the 15th meeting, on 6 March, the Vice-Chairperson read out a revised draft oral decision on the future work of the Working Group on Communications concerning the Status of Women.

6. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Morocco and China, as well as by the observer for Cuba.

7. Also at the same meeting, the Commission adopted the revised draft oral decision (see chap. I, sect. D, draft decision 52/101).

Report of the Working Group on Communications concerning the Status of Women

8. At its 14th meeting (closed), on 5 March, the Commission considered the report of the Working Group on Communications concerning the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2008/CRP.5).

9. At the same meeting, the Commission decided to take note of the report and include it in the report of the Commission. The report of the Working Group was as follows:

1. The Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women met in closed meetings before the fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2002/235 and was guided in its deliberations by the mandate given to it by the Council in its resolution 76 (V), as amended by the Council in its resolutions 304 I (XI), 1983/27 and 1992/19.

2. The Working Group considered the list of confidential communications and replies by Governments (E/CN.6/2008/SW/COMM.LIST/42/R and Add.1). There was no list of non-confidential communications concerning the status of women, since no such communications had been received by the Secretary-General.

3. The Working Group considered the 21 confidential communications received directly by the Division for the Advancement of Women. The Working Group noted that no confidential communications concerning the status of women had been received from other United Nations bodies or the specialized agencies.

4. The Working Group noted that there were replies from Governments to 5 of the 21 communications received by the Division for the Advancement of Women and a reply from a Government to a communication concerning the status of women that had been included in document E/CN.6/2007/SW/COMM.LIST/41/R from 2007.

5. The Working Group recalled its mandate as defined in paragraph 4 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/27, which stated that the Working Group should perform the following functions:

(a) Consideration of all communications, including the replies of Governments thereon, if any, with a view to bringing to the attention of the Commission those communications, including the replies of Governments, that appeared to reveal a consistent pattern of reliably attested injustice and discriminatory practices against women;

(b) Preparation of a report, based on its analysis of the confidential and non-confidential communications, which would indicate the categories in which communications were most frequently submitted to the Commission.

6. The Working Group discerned the following categories in which communications had most frequently been submitted to the Commission:

(a) Sexual violence, including rape and gang rape, against women and girls, committed by private individuals, law enforcement personnel, military personnel and paramilitaries, including in armed conflict and related

situations, as well as the failure by the State to prevent such violations, provide adequate protection and medical and psychological care to victims, bring perpetrators to justice promptly and provide adequate compensation;

(b) Other forms of violence against women and girls with a lack of due diligence by States to adequately investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators and/or a lack of specific legislation in these areas;

(c) Abuse of power, impunity, bribery and corruption, lack of due process, arbitrary detention, including mistreatment of women human rights defenders, and failure to grant a fair trial;

(d) Trafficking in women, inhumane treatment in detention and inadequate conditions of imprisonment for women;

(e) The impact of armed conflict and situations of insecurity, especially in conflict zones, in particular on women and girls belonging to vulnerable groups, such as elderly women, indigenous women, rural women and women with disabilities, who experience multiple forms of discrimination with resulting heightened exposure to, inter alia, sexual violence, torture, abduction and arbitrary killing; and the failure of States to abide by international humanitarian law as well as international human rights law and to protect and assist them;

(f) Serious violations of the human rights of women and girls, including torture, killings and extrajudicial executions;

(g) Physical and psychological threats and pressuring of victims of violence, their families and witnesses by Government officials in order to force retraction of complaints or testimony;

(h) Differential application of punishments in law based on sex, including cruel, inhuman or degrading forms of punishment;

(i) Impact of legislation and practices that discriminate against women in the areas of:

(i) Civil and political rights, especially the right to freedom of expression;

(ii) Procedural guarantees;

(iii) Personal status, including religious and minority status, as well as equal recognition before the law.

7. During its consideration of all communications, including the replies of Governments thereon, and of whether any of these appeared to reveal a consistent pattern of reliably attested injustice and discriminatory practices against women, the Working Group expressed its concern about:

(a) Rape and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls as well as mistreatment of women human rights defenders;

(b) The climate of impunity, abuse of power and corruption, in many cases where violence against women, especially sexual violence, is perpetrated or condoned by law enforcement personnel and military personnel;

(c) The failure by States, in contravention of their human rights obligations, to exercise due diligence so as to prevent all forms of violence against women, in particular girls, and adequately investigate such crimes, punish perpetrators and provide compensation;

(d) The continued existence of legislation or practices in many areas either intended to discriminate, or with the effect of discriminating, against women, despite States' international obligations and commitments and constitutional provisions to outlaw such discrimination.

8. The Working Group appreciated the cooperation by those Governments that had submitted replies to, or observations that clarified, the communications received, and it encourages all others to make such submissions in the future. The Working Group considered that such cooperation is essential for it to discharge its duties effectively. From some of the replies received, the Working Group was encouraged to note that some Governments had improved services provided to women, carried out awareness-raising activities, enacted new legislation and taken other steps to promote gender equality and the advancement of women in accordance with relevant international standards.

Chapter IV

Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions

1. The Commission considered item 5 of its agenda at its 14th meeting, on 5 March 2008. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Letter dated 22 October 2007 from the President of the Economic and Social Council addressed to the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2008/10);

(b) Note by the Secretariat on implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development (E/CN.6/2008/CRP.2).

2. At the same meeting, the President of the Economic and Social Council addressed the Commission and responded to questions posed by the representative of Ecuador and the observer for France.

Action taken by the Commission

3. At its 14th meeting, on 5 March, the Commission decided to authorize the Chairperson to draw the attention of the President of the Council to document E/CN.6/2008/CRP.2 for the information of the Council at its high-level segment in 2008.

Chapter V

Provisional agenda for the fifty-third session of the Commission

1. The Commission considered agenda item 6 at its 16th meeting, on 7 March 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretariat containing the draft provisional agenda for the fifty-third session of the Commission (E/CN.6/2008/L.7).

2. At the same meeting, the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs made oral revisions to the provisional agenda for the fifty-third session of the Commission.

3. Also at the same meeting, the Commission recommended the draft provisional agenda for its fifty-third session, as orally revised, for adoption by the Economic and Social Council (see chap. I, sect. C).

Chapter VI

Adoption of the report of the Commission on its fifty-second session

1. At its resumed 16th meeting, on 13 March 2008, the Rapporteur, Cécile Mballa Eyenga (Cameroon), introduced the draft report of the Commission on its fifty-second session, as contained in document E/CN.6/2008/L.6.

2. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the draft report on its fifty-second session and entrusted the Rapporteur, in consultation with the Secretariat, with its completion.

Chapter VII
Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

1. The Commission on the Status of Women held its fifty-second session at United Nations Headquarters on 9 March 2007 and from 25 February to 7 March 2008. The Commission held 17 meetings (1st to 16th and resumed 16th).

2. The session was opened by the Chairperson of the Commission, Olivier Belle (Belgium), who also made a statement.

3. At the 2nd meeting, on 25 February 2008, statements were made by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

B. Attendance

4. The session was attended by representatives of 45 States members of the Commission. Observers of other States Members of the United Nations and non-Member States, representatives of organizations of the United Nations system and observers of intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations also attended.

C. Election of officers

5. In accordance with paragraph 2 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/21, the officers elected to the Bureau of the Commission should serve for a term of office of two years. The following officers were elected at the 1st meeting of the fifty-second session, on 9 March 2007:

Chairperson:
Olivier **Belle** (Belgium)

Vice-Chairpersons:
Ara **Margarian** (Armenia)
Enna **Park** (Republic of Korea)
Julio **Peralta** (Paraguay)

6. At its 2nd meeting, on 25 February 2008, the Commission elected Cécile Mballa Eyenga (Cameroon) as Vice-Chairperson and also appointed her to serve as Rapporteur during its fifty-second and fifty-third sessions.

D. Agenda and organization of work

7. At its 2nd meeting, on 25 February, the Commission adopted its provisional agenda and approved its organization of work as contained in document E/CN.6/2008/1. The agenda read as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century":

(a) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives:

(i) Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(ii) Evaluation of progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions on women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution, and in post-conflict peacebuilding;

(b) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men;

(c) Gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters.

4. Communications concerning the status of women.

5. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions.

6. Provisional agenda for the fifty-third session of the Commission.

7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its fifty-second session.

E. Appointment of the members of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women

8. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/27, the Commission established a working group to consider communications concerning the status of women. The following five members, nominated by their regional groups, were appointed to the working group at the fifty-second session:

Ivana **Kozár** (Croatia)

Carlos Enrique **Garcia Gonzalez** (El Salvador)

Charif **Cherkaoui** (Morocco)

Askar **Zhumabayev** (Kazakhstan)

Emil Breki **Heggvidsson** (Iceland)

9. The Working Group held three meetings.

10. At the 16th meeting, on 7 March, in the absence of any nominations, the Commission decided that upon nomination by their respective regional groups, candidates for membership on the Working Group would be permitted to participate fully in the work of the Working Group for the fifty-third session.

F. Documentation

11. The list of documents before the Commission at its fifty-second session is available at the following website: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/52sess.htm.

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